

Deepotsav-2024: Stage all set for the dazzling spectacle of devotion

28 Lakh Diyas Set To Light Up Ayodhya

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Ayodhya: Launched in 2017, the Deepotsav in Ayodhya is getting bigger and better every year. Keeping up with the tradition, the affair will not just be grander, but also special given the fact that it will be the first Diwali event after the consecration of Ram Lala at the newly constructed Ram Temple in Jan this year.

"The plan is to light over 28 lakh earthen lamps together on Wednesday evening (Oct 30)," said an official.

With only two days left, the cardboard boxes containing lamps and wicks are already lined up even as scores of workers can be seen sweeping in the area around Ram Ki Paidi, the irrigation canal next to the Saryu river.

To add more glitter, an elaborate drone show will be organised in the evening with synchronised formations of various characters from the Ramayana illuminating the skies above the Saryu, leaving a lasting impression on the visitors attending the religious celebrations.

Pulkit Jain, director of the company providing the materials required to make the event successful, said a total of 32 lakh earthen lamps, 45 lakh cotton wicks, and 1



Alay Kumar

ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS: Preparations underway for the Deepotsav 2024 celebrations in Ayodhya, on Sunday

lakh litres of oil have already been supplied for the event. "All the materials have been provided to the organisers in advance. We sourced the materials from Ayodhya and neighbouring districts so that the local population gets priority. Additional diyas and items are provided each year as some boxes get damaged during the transit and movement of goods."

For the first time, the payment for sourcing the materials used for Deepotsav has been done digitally to the potters and other vendors involved in the supply chain. In another addition, 1,100 saints, seers, and acharyas from various parts of the state have been invited to recite prayers and shlokas at Saryu Ghat during the evening aarti.

State-owned helicopters will also remain stationed in Ayodhya on the day to shower rose petals and flowers over

the tableaux and Ramleela artists. Deepotsav celebrations will begin at 9am in the morning with Shobha Yatra (comprising various tableaux and artists) hitting the streets. The first one will arrive at Ram Path from Saket Degree College in the morning.

After covering the entire route from Saket Degree College to Lata Chowk via Ram Path, the action will shift to Ram Katha Park later in the day, where prominent artists from all over the world will perform various acts from the Ramayana. Ram and Seta will arrive at the scene on a chariot after getting off from a helicopter while devotees and local residents shower flowers on them along the route.

After the symbolic coronation of Lord Ram, the group of artists will join the celebrations at Saryu Ghat for the evening aarti, after which the

Rolling out eco-friendly red carpet

Eco-friendly, long-lasting lamps will illuminate the Shri Ram Temple. Designed to prevent soot and stains, these lamps will preserve the temple's pristine structure. Overseeing preparations is Ashu Shukla, a retired IG of the Bihar cadre, who is ensuring that the temple is beautifully adorned with floral arrangements and lights. Special wax lamps will be used to reduce carbon emissions, aligning with the event's focus on environmental stewardship. From Oct 29 to Nov 1, the temple will remain open until midnight, giving devotees the chance to admire its stunning decorations. Visitors can enter through gate 4B to experience the temple's grandeur. **TNN**

80K-diya Swastik formation at Ram Ki Paidi

A striking 80,000-diya Swastik formation at Ram Ki Paidi's Ghat 10 will serve as the festival's auspicious highlight. Under the guidance of Prof Pratibha Goyal and supported by over 30,000 volunteers, 55 ghats will be illuminated in a record-breaking celebration. Volunteers from universities, colleges, and NGOs are organising diyas in grids across the ghats, each carefully filled with 30 ml mustard oil. Additional amenities, including clean drinking water and food for volunteers, have been arranged. Deepotsav will showcase Ayodhya's commitment to tradition and spirituality, with 'Jai Shri Ram' chants filling the air as volunteers toil. **TNN**

action will shift to Ram Ki Paidi. From 6.20 pm onwards, final preparations to light the diyas will be initiated. Adjudicators from the Guinness Book of Records will be present to go through the proceedings before providing the final figures (how many diyas remained lit up together).

Post that, a drone show, laser show, and three-dimensional projection mapping covering events from the Ramayana will be screened before the audience, and the celebrations will culminate with fireworks later in the evening.

This time, a total of 55 ghats are going to be used to line up 28 lakh diyas. 30,000 volunteers from 51 colleges

and educational institutes, besides 40 voluntary organisations, have started work on the ground from Saturday. Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Avadh University plays the role of the nodal agency.

Divisional commissioner of Ayodhya, Gaurav Dayal, said that the process to hand over the IDs to the volunteers is ongoing at the moment. "Preparations are going smoothly this time. We look forward to welcoming the visitors on Oct 30," he said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is expected to arrive in Ayodhya in the afternoon on Oct 30 and will leave the next morning from the city, said an officer.